



OHIO NEWS MEDIA ASSOCIATION | 1335 DUBLIN ROAD, SUITE 216-B | COLUMBUS OH 43215
DENNIS R. HETZEL, PRESIDENT & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

December 8, 2017

The Honorable John Kasich
Governor of the State of Ohio
Riffe Center, 30th Floor
77 South High Street
Columbus, OH 43215-6117

Re: *Newsprint Case before the U.S. Department of Commerce/International Trade Commission*

Dear Governor Kasich:

This is to request your urgent assistance on a matter affecting the survival of printed newspaper publishing in the United States. The Ohio News Media Association represents more than 200 newspapers that employ thousands of employees who help local communities stay informed across the Buckeye State.

Our member newspapers are extremely troubled by countervailing and anti-dumping duty petitions regarding Canadian imports of uncoated groundwood paper which includes newsprint used by newspapers. NORPAC, which only operates one mill in Longview, WA with approximately 250 employees, filed these petitions calling for import duties in excess of 50 percent. The proposed duties endanger our members' ability to continue providing high-quality local journalism in communities across our state. Further, NORPAC's petitions are based on incorrect assessments of a changing market and are flatly inconsistent with the views of the broader paper industry.

To understand the seriousness of this issue to newspapers, it is necessary to understand the delicate posture in which newspapers operate in today's world. Newspapers are in the midst of a years-long process of our reader base shifting to digital platforms. Print subscriptions have declined by more than 30 percent over the last 10 years, and consequently the newspaper industry is using less newsprint. This is simply a fact of life in the digital ecosystem, and has nothing at all to do with trade issues.

Although newspapers have successfully increased digital readership, online advertising has proven to be much less lucrative than print advertising. During this transition to digital, many of our newspapers are operating on the slimmest of margins in an effort to continue producing the high-quality news and information content that our communities deserve. If NORPAC or other domestic manufacturers raises its own prices to take advantage of the supply disruptions caused by the duties, newspapers would have

no choice but to increase subscription prices or cut costs. Price increases would cause additional subscribers to abandon print subscriptions, and ironically, accelerate the decline in the newsprint market hurting US newsprint producers. That is why other U.S. producers of newsprint and the American Forest and Paper Association - which represents the broader U.S. paper industry - oppose the NORPAC petitions.

Increased costs for newsprint will undermine our member newspapers ability to continue paying thousands of reporters, writers, photographers, editors and business-side employees that collectively produce and deliver a newspaper to your constituents' doorstep every day. Further, facing increased costs, many small-town newspapers will be at risk a failing. It hard for us to believe that our trade laws could be used in a way to put American jobs at risk to protect temporarily a few jobs located in just one community.

On behalf of our member newspapers, we respectfully ask that you contact the U.S. Department of Commerce and the U.S. International Trade Commission to let them know that NORPAC's brazen attempt to manipulate the trade laws will have a devastating impact on the newspaper industry, and ironically, threaten more jobs in the U.S. than the jobs the petitions claim to protect.

We appreciate your consideration of this request. We look forward to hearing from you.

Respectfully,

Dennis R. Hetzel